Chocolate—food for sweetheart or the gods

ITH Volentine's Day just around the corner, I thought it might be appropriate to talk about the most popular Valentine's Day glit — chocolate.

Chocolate is a consuming passion in this country. Each of us easts an average of 10 pounds a year. Swedish naturalist Linneaus, who named most of the plants we know today, named the cacao tree "theobroms cacao" meaning "food for the gods." A real accurate description!

CHOCOLATE IS literally an inter-national creation: The cocoa bean.



Terry

which is the base of all chocolate, grows in big pods in tropical areas. History notes that Central America recorded the use of cocoa beans payment and demanded as trinkels as long as 1,000 years ago. The beans were associated also with divinity and power.

These beans were used by the Actives to make a cold drink called chocolail. When Cortex conquered Mexico, chocolaic was one of the valuables sent back to Spain. There, the arristocrats heated the drink, sweened it and added cinamon — the same way it's still enjoyed today. From Spain, the cocoa beans moved to France and then throughout Europe.

THE DUTCH neutralized the acid the bean to mellow the flavor.

The Swiss contributed milk chocolate by adding milk. They also are responsible for turning chocolate

Kelly

into a solid food by "conching" the liquid. Conching is a process of long, slow heating and stirring that develops the flavor and gives chocolate condy its melting smoothness.

Chocolate is a very complicated, natural food. Its flavor comes from more than 1,200 different chemicals. And why one person prefers one brand to another is a matter of personal choice.

While basic ingredients are the same for all chocolate, the blend of cocoa beans used, the amount of cocoa butter added and other factors all affect the quality and the taste. The quality of any chocolate depends on the manufacturer's formula, which is a closely guarded secret.

THESE SIMPLE tests will help

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you judge your favorite chocolate:

• Appearance: The surface should be smooth and glossy. A dull surface may indicate that vegetable fat was used instead of cocoa butter.

A whitish film, called "bloom," on the surface comes from the chocolate being exposed to temperature changes. The bloom is actually some of the ecca butter that has melted and risen to the surface. It's unattractive, but harmless.

Smell: There should be a rich, satisfying chocolate aroma, not too sweet or too bilter. A lack of aroma may indicate a lack of flavor also.

Break: The chocolate should break cleanly with no crumbling edges. There may even be a snapping sound if it's a thick plece.

Melt: When held in your hand, the chocolate should feel cool and should start to melt. Messy chocolate is a sign of quality.

Tavor: When extent, the chocolate should have a full, rounded taste that lingers after it is swallowed.

WHILE CHOCOLATE has some negative aspects — It's high in calo-ries and saturated fat and may cause an allergic reaction in some people

— it does have other positive quali-ties besides its terrific lasts.
Checolate is a quick source of en-ergy, it contains, in small amounts, some important nutrients including calcium, iron, potassium, phos-phorus, vitamin A and some B-com-plex vitamins. Also, checolate is not had for your teeth, it contains a pro-tein that actually helps prevent tooth decay.

tein that actually helps prevent tooth decay.
Finally, be sure to save a few pieces from your valentine. Checolate contains phenylethylamine, the same chemical that the brain produces when a person is in love. When the romance entis, the chemical drops, too.
Eating chocolate may increase the amount of this chemical in the body and make you feel better again.

The Consumer Mailbag answers your questions. Address mail to The Consumer Mailbag, Concern Detroit, One Kennedy Square, 4th Floor, Detroit 48226.

ABA ignores its women

The American Bar Association is ignoring its women members and needs to make them more visible according to Marilyn Jean Kelly, Birmingham attorney running for the state Court of Appeals.

Shifts I control of Appeals.

Shifts I control of Appeals.

Creation on Women in the Profession.

"Creation of the commission is a step forward," said Kelly, president of the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan. "But if the ABA wants to assist women in overenming the barriers they face as lawyers, it

For the 12th straight week, average self-serve no-lead gasoline prices fell along main state highways. Prices have tumbled 7.1 cents during

Michigan.

Its weekly "fuel gauge" survey of 300 stations along major state travel routes shows self-serve no-lead down 0.7 cent in one week to average 92.3 cents per gallon — 18.7 cents less

Fuel prices have dropped 7.1 cents

Self-serve regular decreased 0.8 cent to average 91.2 cents, 16.5 cents below full-serve.

"Of the 12 members elected in De-cember to be state delegates to the ABA, none were women. No woman was even nominated or is running in a contested race for state delegate." Kelly also complained that ABA refused — "no reason given" — to conduct a conference on the special interests of women lawyers.

She has practiced law for 17 years and served two terms as a member of the State Board of Education.

The appeals court seat she is seek-ing covers Oakland and 13 other counties.

Self-serve regular increased 0.4 cent to average 87 cents per gallon. It costs from 79.9 cents to \$1.059.

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